



CITY COUNCIL

Nominations & Appointments Committee

Monday, March 18, 2013
Meeting Report

Attendance: S. Marmarou, D. Reed

Others Attending: S. Katzenmoyer, C. Geffken, J. Slifko, F. Denbowski, R. Corcoran, M. Goodman-Hinnershitz

The meeting was called to order at 4:17 pm by Mr. Marmarou.

I. Interviews Charter Review Commission

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for candidates to be well-versed on the Charter so that work can begin without too much education.

Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that the Mayoral candidates are not present as it was determined that an interview was not needed.

Mr. Marmarou questioned why the candidates were interested in serving.

Mr. Denbowski stated that he was approached by Mr. Waltman to serve in this capacity. He stated that he has been a City employee for 15 years. He stated that he is open-minded and has a working knowledge of the Charter.

Mr. Slifko stated that he has been involved with the Charter process since 1992 when the movement to change the form of government began. He stated that he has a legal background and that it is very important to make meaningful changes as the Charter is the City's constitution. He stated that the Charter is not perfect and that changes are needed.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that she applied to be a member of the first Charter Review Commission and was not initially chosen. She stated that she was named after a member resigned. She stated that a former mentor taught her a lot and that imperfections of the Charter

need to be clarified. She stated that she has a keen sight on what needs to be addressed and is excited to be a part of this project.

Mr. Geffken stated that he has worked in positions defined by the Charter. He stated that he has seen conflicts first-hand and noted his desire to clarify ambiguities. He stated that he has spoken with the writers of the Charter and knows their intentions of how it should be applied. He noted the need for these items to be clarified.

Mr. Corcoran stated that he hopes to clarify many issues and that he hopes to bring fresh eyes and fresh ideas to the table.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if anyone would remove anything from the Charter.

Mr. Slifko stated that the greatest problems seem to be the conflict between the executive branch of government and a professional managing director. He stated that their roles need to be better clarified and that there needs to be discussion about whether these roles are the best system for the City's day-to-day operations.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed with Mr. Slifko. She stated that she would not remove anything from the Charter but would make improvements. She also noted the conflicting role of one City Solicitor.

Mr. Geffken stated that there is a lack of clarity. He noted the need for clarity on the interaction between Council and the Administration. He stated that Section 103 Exercise of Power needs to be refined. He stated that he understands the need but that more clarity is needed.

Mr. Denbowski noted his experience in the Mayor's office. He noted the need to clarify the roles of Council and the Mayor. He agreed with the conflict created by having one City Solicitor report to both parties. He stated that conflicts slow down the governmental process.

Mr. Marmarou expressed his belief that the Charter calls for one City Solicitor to help control legal costs. Mr. Geffken agreed but stated that legal representation is still outsourced.

Mr. Marmarou spoke about a pension issue which occurred in the past.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if each Council district was represented. Ms. Katzenmoyer explained that each Councilor made a recommendation on an appointment.

Mr. Marmarou questioned if Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz and Mr. Corcoran would continue in their role on the Charter Review Commission if they are not re-elected. Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that in the past, these decisions were made by Council.

Ms. Reed stated that the majority of the work on this Commission should be complete before the end of 2013. Mr. Slifko agreed and stated that the Commission has six months to bring their recommendations to Council. *Note: Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz's term does not expire until 2016.*

Ms. Reed questioned if candidates were comfortable with the timeframe.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz noted the need for a realistic review and to prioritize amendments. She noted the need not to create a false timeline and stated that the Mayor wants amendments on the November ballot.

Mr. Slifko stated that six months would be September. He noted the need to bring the recommendations to Council for their vote to place items on the ballot. Ms. Katzenmoyer expressed the belief that ballot questions must be submitted to the County Elections office 60 days prior to the election which would be early September.

Mr. Geffken noted the need to not rush the process.

There was discussion of the ballot deadline and the resulting timeline.

Mr. Geffken placed a call to the Elections office. The May 2014 election does qualify as a municipal election. Ballot questions are due to the Elections office 60 days prior to the General Election.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz stated that this would mean that the ballot questions must be introduced and passed by Council in August and that the Commission recommendations would need to be presented in July.

Mr. Slifko explained that the first Review Commission took several months to build consensus before progress was made.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz agreed and stated that there were several brainstorming sessions.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he is very comfortable with all these candidates and recommended moving them forward for Council action.

Ms. Goodman-Hinnershitz suggested that a representative from the Solicitor's office attend all meetings in addition to a staff liaison.

Mr. Geffken suggested that a member of Council staff act as liaison.

Ms. Reed thanked all for attending and noted her recommendation that the candidates move forward for Council action.

Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that one candidate was not in attendance. She questioned whether to move his name forward. Mr. Corcoran stated that he sees a conflict with this candidate as the company in which he is a partner is currently involved in a Charter suit. Ms. Katzenmoyer was asked to get an opinion about this from the Solicitor.

Ms. Katzenmoyer was requested to also check with the Solicitor about the timing of actions needed to be taken, whether the Mayor can serve on the Commission and sign the legislation, who would act as staff liaison, and if legal representation can be present at all meetings. Ms. Katzenmoyer stated that she will email the list of questions to the Committee before sending them to Mr. Younger to ensure all questions will be answered.

Mr. Corcoran stated that he does not support the appointment of this candidate. He stated that there are too many conflicts and that this would appear to be a political appointment.

Mr. Marmarou stated that he does not know the candidate well.

The Nominations and Appointments Committee adjourned at 4:45 pm.

Respectfully Submitted by,
Shelly Katzenmoyer,
Deputy City Clerk